

Late Autumn Newsletter 2020

Volume 16-6



Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum
& Archive Centre -
Dereham Heritage Trust

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Letter from the Chair Trevor Ogden

I don't think that there is anything original left to say about our present circumstances, so I hope that all members of DHT and their families are keeping well, and perhaps finding some positive things amongst all the obvious negatives. The online discussion of the October talk went well, and we have just recorded the November talk. This is Susanna Wade Martins on Benjamin Armstrong and his times, and perhaps by the time you read this you will have had a chance to view it. I think it is excellent, and look forward to the discussion on 11th November. The speakers through to March have all agreed to record their talks, and although we are still learning how to do it, I am pleased that we are managing to provide a talk each month through the winter.

As always, the regret is that this does not help those with no internet access. It seems unlikely that restrictions on face-to-face meetings will ease before spring, so at the moment we are stuck for ideas. We look forward to getting together in due course, and perhaps we will have found some new members who have discovered our on line talks.

There has been some intriguing news from St Nicholas' church this month. It has come to light that there is a piece of stone, with medieval carving and inscription, built into the altar table, and no one knows its origin. If any readers know about this, the new rector Canon Paul Cubitt would be pleased to hear from you. There are indications that it may have been put there during the renewal of the floor and furnishing in 1988, but at the time of writing this is just a theory. Sue Walker has been helping with some photography, and we have done a search of the Dereham and Fakenham Times archive for the period of the 1988 renewals, but that has produced nothing definite. Paul continues to lead the investigation, and we hope that this will result in an article in our Newsletter in due course.

We were sad to hear of the death of Lorna Southgate. Lorna was increasingly frail, and sadly died following a fall. Those of us who met her will remember her as a cheerful person who did what she could to keep active. She had been a museum volunteer, and regularly came to our annual dinners. This photo was taken at a volunteers' meeting. She came to the last face-to-face meeting we had, and had contacted us a few times to say how much she enjoyed our Newsletters.

As we went to press, we were further saddened to learn of the recent death of our member Pat Skittrall. We are sorry to hear this and send our best wishes to her family and friends.

Finally, there is not much more to report on Bishop Bonner's Cottage. We are expecting a contractor to start work inside, and we have moved the exhibits in preparation. The targetting needs to have a protective cover for winter. We understand that a contract has been signed and we hope that this work will get underway very soon.



Together with around 30 other community organisations, Dereham Heritage Trust is a member of the aboutDereham Partnership which was started in 2018 to address issues we all have in common.

Among our key aims, one that stands out is our ambition to raise the profile of Dereham town and to improve the image of the town. We do this through our website and through the visitor guide we published and which can be found here: aboutdereham.org/great-place.

In 2019 we managed to secure funding for new pedestrian signs in Dereham town centre. This is an issue that had long been a bugbear for many people and previous studies had shown there was a pressing need to replace the old and obsolete finger-posts with something more contemporary and more helpful to visitors. To give just one example, there was no sign at all to the Dereham Memorial Hall!

Some wayfinding consultants visited the town and produced a report which recommended a suite of interpretation panels, as well as finger-posts, to illustrate something of the history and the somewhat quaint or quirky character of the town. The aboutDereham Partnership met with all three councils – Norfolk County Council Highways Department, Breckland Council and Dereham Town Council and they each agreed to contribute one third of the funding needed for the project.

This led to the formation of the Dereham Wayfinding Partnership comprising the three councils, aboutDereham and Dereham Heritage Trust. Unfortunately no face to face meetings were possible from March 2020, but work has continued behind the scenes and several key decisions have been agreed by the funders.

Following advice from the Historic Buildings Officer, we have agreed that many of our interpretation panels will be a low lectern style, so as not to obscure the view of the historic buildings behind. A good example of this is the panel which will be located to the right of Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum. It will be a wide and low lectern style, so that families with children and wheelchair users can easily read the content, but can also see over the top to the bell tower behind.

The three councils have also agreed to a very dark navy blue colour for the powder coated frames of these panels. Because the Historic Buildings Officer ruled that heritage style finger-posts are not necessary and are, if anything, a bit of a pastiche of Victorian style, the councils have also agreed to a very contemporary style of finger-post and we are now in the process of obtaining quotations for these.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to the DHT Trustees who have given their time and their expertise to create text and images for some of the proposed interpretation panels. Had they not been willing to work together with us on this, we may have been obliged to use some of our budgets to hire consultants to do this work – and that would have led to less control and less of a feeling of ownership and pride in what is produced.

The Trustees are also eagle-eyed proof-readers and have been most helpful in reviewing text, spotting errors and suggesting how to improve the text. We are particularly grateful to DHT for access to photographs from their archive. Sue Walker is working with us on the design and layout of our panels and we hope that you will find that they enhance the visitor experience in our town and help to direct them to our main attractions.

We hope that the panels will be in place for the start of May 2021.

It has been hard to make progress on this project under lockdown conditions, but our experience of working with individuals from Dereham Heritage Trust has been very positive and shows that, while partnership working can be difficult at first, when it comes together much more can be achieved and with a very much better outcome.

The image below is a good example of the style and content of the 10 panels which will be placed at key points next to our main attractions. We hope that you find it interesting.

Dereham Livestock Market



1850 – Slaters Directory

Dereham - The market, held on Friday, has lately attained great importance, and dealers in the country around: very considerable business is transacted in corn and cattle, and this market is esteemed as one of the best in the county for pigs.

1869 - The Farmer's Magazine

There is a great sale for old sows in the autumn at East Dereham market, and they will sometimes be found there nearly eight hundred strong. The North Country dealers come to meet them and take them to Yorkshire, where they are sold at £3 to £5 each, and duly grazed into bacon.

The stone water trough is used now as a flower bed (on your right) but was originally gifted to the town in 1913 by the Norfolk & Norwich branch of the RSPCA, for the welfare of the animals.

The bottom trough was for sheep and cats and dogs, while the top was for the cattle and horses. On the end was a fountain for human consumption of fresh cold water.



Welcome to Dereham!

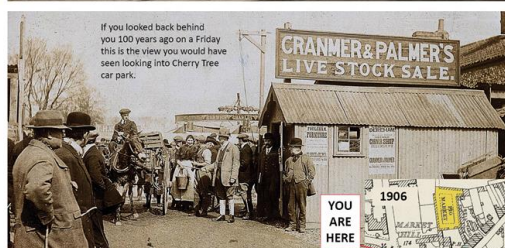
In front of you is the market place. On market days a hundred years ago it would have been full of people buying and selling all the necessities of life and much else too. But if you had arrived here on a Friday, the first thing you would have noticed would have been the sight, sound and smell of livestock, around you here, and in much of the rest of the town centre.

In front of you, where the war memorial now stands, there was an obelisk with mileages to nearby towns and next to that - sheep pens!

On your right were cattle and they were up Theatre Street on your left too. Pigs were in the car park behind you. Down the other end of the Market Place, farm machinery was displayed in front of what is now the cinema.

Beyond that, horses were in Church Street and, furthest of all, poultry was in Bull Inn Yard, down the High Street towards the library.

Dereham's very popular markets were renowned throughout England in the nineteenth century



To find your way around the town and learn more about places to visit, please go and look at the information board in the middle of the Market Place



Produced by the Dereham Wayfinding Partnership of Dereham Town Council, Breckland District Council, Norfolk County Council, the aboutDereham Partnership and Dereham Heritage Trust

Image to be outside the Cherry Tree car park, at the start of our heritage trail

Recent talks *Ken Hawkins*

14 October : Norwich at Work - Sarah Doig

It would be impossible accurately to summarise Sarah Doig's 100 minute comprehensive survey of 'Norwich at Work', so this is a poor and selective record of some of its highlights.

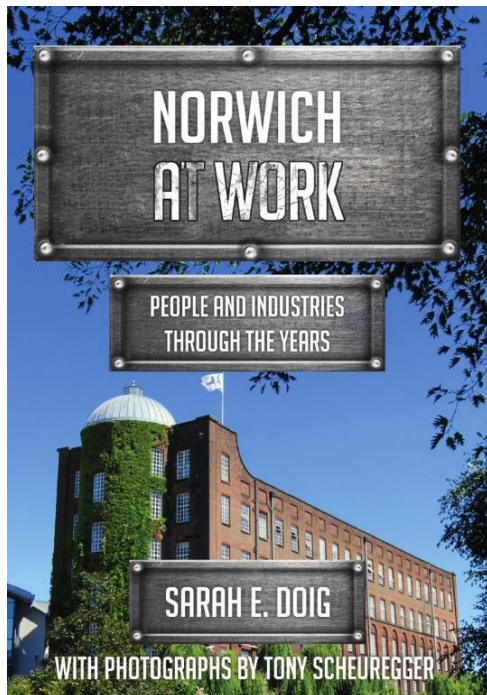
Norwich was shaped during the Middle Ages. The castle keep was built in 1120, sitting on an earlier mound. In 1294, city walls existed to north, south and west, with the Wensum forming an eastern boundary. Richard I allowed self government in 1194.

In the 15th century; before the Black Death, Norwich had a population of 25,000. Early in that century, Merchant Guilds were started; the Guildhall, built in 1407, remained an administrative centre until City Hall was built in 1938. The city had about 150 trades, about half in manufacturing; workers toiled for 6 days each week, having only Sundays off, when only cooks, brewers and taverns could open.

A major trade was in cloth, a mainstay until the industrial revolution. Norfolk weavers developed worsted cloth, which was dyed for sale. Dyes included woad, weld, and, of course, madder (hence Maddermarket). Another trade was leather; tanning was a smelly process, so was often moved to the outskirts of the city. Sarah also noted that Norwich was the centre of the herring trade: fish was important because the church forbade meat consumption on certain days.

Norwich had been a place of trade from the earliest times, with a market on Tombland (the name means open space) until the Norman conquest, when it moved to its current site. In

Tudor and Stuart times, Norwich was the second city in England; a Royal Charter in 1556 defined a wider city boundary.



In the mid 16th century, competition from foreign, lighter, fabrics led to a decline in Norwich's finances, and Dutch and French master weavers were invited to the city; these were the Strangers (hence Strangers Hall), though not all Strangers were weavers. The two groups produced different types of cloth, and worshipped in separate churches; nor was their presence uncontroversial, leading to controls and inspection.

At the end of the Stuart period, the number and range of shops increased, with bookshops becoming popular. The first coffee house was opened in 1676, and made printed material available for reading. Stagecoaches also appeared at this time, with a Norwich to London service.

By the 18th century, population had reached 37,000, whose prosperity stemmed from textiles. The city saw new building, such as the Baptist Chapel and the Octagon Chapel, while the river and roads were improved.

The Bethel hospital (1713) for 'incurable lunatics' was followed in 1771-3 by the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital near St Stephens Gate, first for poor people, later for others by subscription.

During the Victorian period, population rose to 100,000 (1891). Railways came with the opening of Thorpe station in 1844, though the present station was not built until 1886. In 1849, Victoria station opened, providing an alternative route to London. The third Norwich station, City, opened in 1882, was bombed during World War II and was never rebuilt. Within the city a horse drawn bus service started in 1879, with electric trams in 1900; the last tram ran in 1935.

No survey of Norwich could be complete without mentioning that Norwich was said to have a pub for every day of the year, but in the 1800s, it had 600, now down to 200; the Adam & Eve (1249) is the oldest pub still serving.

We were then taken on a trip round other well known businesses - Colman's, Jarrold, Caley's, Hills & Underwood, Read's, Barnard's, Chamberlain's, Holmes & Sons and Bonds (now John Lewis).

During the 20th century, Sarah referred to the flooding in 1912, the events during World War II (and the subsequent rebuilding), and the rebuilding of the market area in 1938 (when City Hall was built). Norwich built two undercover shopping areas - Chapelfields and Castle Mall.

To conclude, we were reminded that it was our own Dereham born George Borrow who wrote of Norwich that it was "A fine old city", a phrase largely adopted by the city on its welcoming signs (the 'old' was dropped). With its current population of 132,000, it was in 2006 the 8th most prosperous shopping destination in the country.

14 members joined Sarah at the Zoom 'meeting', asking questions (and getting answers) about a range of subjects she had mentioned - Colman's (and the school they had established), tanneries (their location and comparison with Indian tanneries), drovers (the use of St Faith's as the location for large cattle sales for stock brought down from the north to be fattened in Norfolk), brush making, bone milling and starch.

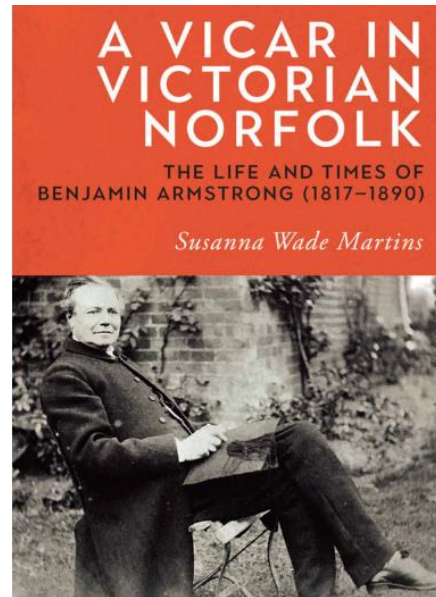
11 November talk : Armstrong's Dereham - Susanna Wade Martins

Susanna introduced her talk by explaining that she had drawn upon the 11 volumes of handwritten diaries left by Rev Benjamin Armstrong during his time as vicar in Dereham - 1850 to 1888. She focused on changes in the church and changes in and around Dereham, with brief notes about his family.

Through the 18th century, the Anglican church was in decline: churches were becoming derelict, the clergy were remote, services were few and sermons long. In the 1830s, there were several reforms - so for example parsons were to live in their parishes, with a maximum of two livings, leading to the building of new vicarages. As a result, a new breed of dedicated and serious minded clergymen took up their roles, with duties related to the church, the school and the poor. There was also a split between 'high' and 'low' church, and Armstrong wrote about this too: he was a supporter of high church, and introduced ritual to the church.

Another element was the 'restoration' of churches to their medieval glory: he undertook changes in Dereham, beautifying the chancel in 1853 with a stained glass window and a gothic reredos. In his final years, he built St Withburga's Chapel (then on the edge of town).

At the start of his tenure, Dereham was ceasing to be a sleepy market town with the arrival in 1846 of the railway: no longer was it Borrow's 'pretty, quiet Dereham, thou pattern of an English country town'. Susanna showed us the tithe map (1836), showing most building around the Market Place and along one street (High Street). By 1853, he commented on numerous new houses being built, and by 1881, the OS map showed many more houses around the town.



1853



1881

There were now several trains a day to Norwich, and so to London and other destinations. The station area became the centre of a substantial industrial and housing area. A gas works was built, providing street lighting.

We were taken for a walk up Church Street with Rev Armstrong in 1851, starting at our own Bishop Bonner's Cottages, then housing 7 families. Opposite was Church House, home of his clerk John Philo. Going up Church Street, he would pass a coffee house and a public house, plus 11 other shops, and the postmistress; the yards behind were occupied by generally poorer people. There were more shops and yards around the Market Place, plus banks and solicitors, and yet more in the nearby streets.

The Corn Hall opened in 1856, providing space for farmers to haggle instead of in the 19 pubs recorded at the time. At the inaugural dinner, with 250 guests, he appealed to farmers to help improve the physical, moral, spiritual and intellectual good of the labouring classes.

For Armstrong, visiting his flock was important, dressed in his dark frock coat and wide brimmed hat; he visited friends, the 'middling sort' near the Market Place, and the poor - the last at Toftwood, Badley Moor, Etling Green and Dumppling Green. He distributed money from the weekly offertory, and at Christmas provided bread. The 1853-4 winter was especially cold, and he arranged coal tickets, and joined with others in providing other things for the poor.

He also joined with dissenters to provide a secular Institute and Library, opened in 1853. The first lecture, attended by 297, was in November: Physical Science in relation to the Arts and Conveniences of Life, for which he gave a 20 minute vote of thanks. In 1854 he went to London to buy books for the Library.

Society was strictly divided by class - the Lee Warners, who were friends and landowners, at the top; he also counted with pride several titled people as his friends. The next layer was those who 'could not be well asked to dinner but were in fact people of good conversation and intelligence', who were invited to a parochial evening party. The most influential were the tradesmen - middle class and well off. Some of the middle class were sometimes overlooked - lawyers and doctors - whom he also visited. Lower down the scale again were new families, some from the railways, others from industries; and at the bottom, the poor, whom he seemed not to understand, talking of them as apathetic and reserved.

In 1853, the Dereham Health Board, which he started, met for the first time. Although the town looked clean, he found 'fearful nuisances' in the rear of the houses, though farmers living outside the town declined to pay for improvements within it.

In 1869, the churchyard was closed for burials and a new cemetery was opened, with two new chapels built - one for Church of England and one for Dissenters.

The Agricultural Union started in the 1870s, and in 1874 was vigorously opposed to the enclosure of Rushmeadow, previously a common, by the Trustees (of which Armstrong was one) to enable it to be let for water cress growth: the attempt was defeated.

The town continued to spread as more industry developed. Armstrong supported the school, spending hours encouraging attendance and testing pupils on the catechism. In 1841, Lee Warner supported a National School, leaving Armstrong to raise funds through subscriptions for the Anglican establishment. He was active in providing treats and entertainments: the highlight was the school fete.

Finally, Susanna mentioned Armstrong's family. His wife Nellie, and daughters Helen (aged 6) and Louise (known as Lily, aged 2) came with him to Dereham in 1850. Later that year, John was born, and in 1853, Herbert (Bertie) and in 1855, Gertrude. His diaries reveal great care for his children, though Nellie is not a very clear figure. Helen stayed at home, while Lily eloped with a 'ne'er do well'. John became a curate, while Bertie had a career in the Army.

Susanna ended with Christmas 1855, when Armstrong's parents joined them. He performed parish duties - distribution of 400 loaves, dinners to be given, stipends paid to teachers and decoration of the church. At home, there was a Christmas tree, decorated by the children. On 26 December, baby Gertrude was unwell, but the doctor said all was well on 27 December. But on 28 December, she was worse, and later on that day she died of a chest infection. She was buried, attended only by Armstrong, in the churchyard, where he erected a cross in memory.

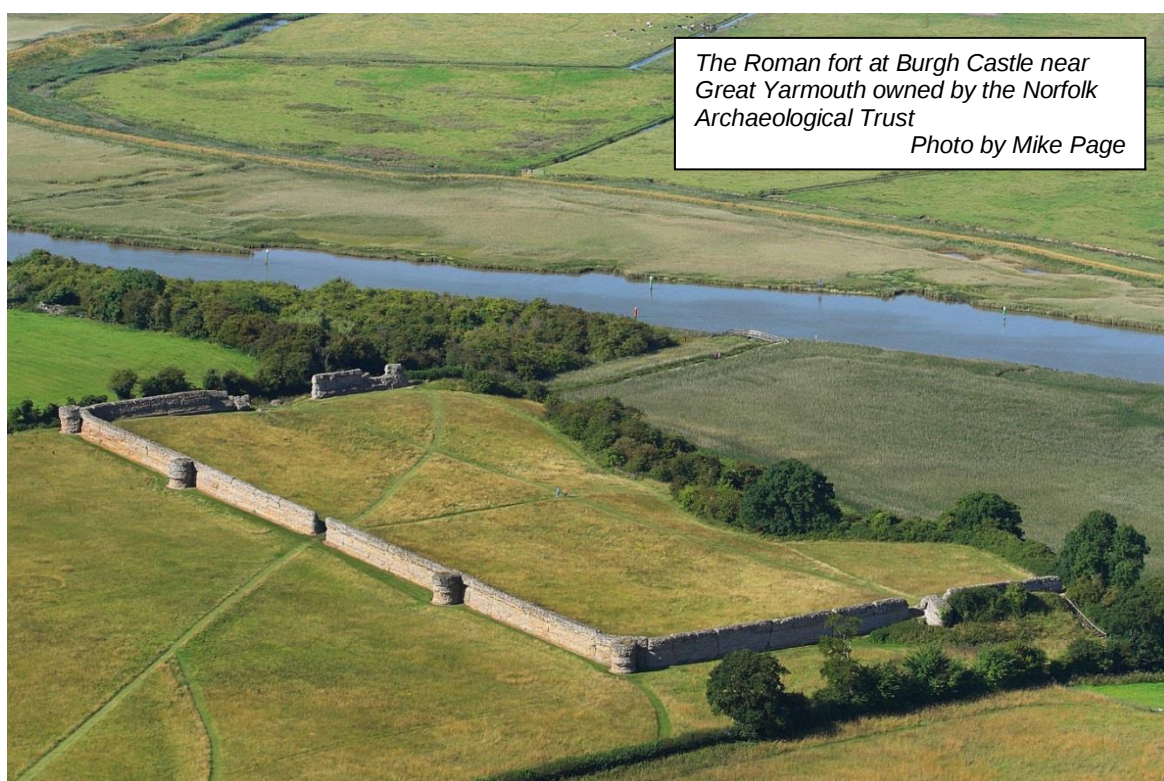
On the night, 14 members (3 of them new to DHT - *welcome!*) joined in as Susanna fielded a range of questions, and discussed many further Armstrong and Dereham matters.

What would you suggest? *Peter Wade-Martins*

If you were asked to write a book to illustrate what you think are the 100 places which are most significant for the history of Norfolk (on the understanding that they should be accessible to the public or at least visible from a public highway) which would you choose? That is the task Susanna and I and another archaeologist, David Robertson, have set ourselves.

The idea has come from a book recently published by John Davies and Tim Pestell entitled *A History of Norfolk in 100 Objects* published by The History Press, price £14.99. If you don't yet have a copy I do suggest you drop hints that you would like one for Christmas. It would *almost* fit into a stocking. John and Tim were writing their book while working in Norwich Castle Museum, so they had full access to the museum's collections and were spoilt for choice. Each object is illustrated with a fine colour photograph.

Inspired by this book we approached the same History Press and they agreed to publish ours if we would write it. The text is nearly finished, and we have had the support of two aviators who have been keen to take or provide fine colour aerial photographs to illustrate the places we have chosen.



The first place we have chosen is the site at Happisburgh where the earliest evidence, including footprints and flint tools, for human occupation in the British Isles dating back 900,000 years has been found. There is the fine Roman fort at Burgh Castle (a must if you haven't seen it). We have some splendid castles and monasteries, and we have the Nelson Monument in Great Yarmouth. Near the end we have a Cold War airfield from the time that Norfolk was very much in the front line of the Cold war. We finish with the grand Millennium Library in Norwich, built following the disastrous fire when so many important Norfolk books were destroyed, while all the archives were saved, in the old Norwich Central Library.

So, we hope you will enjoy the book when it is published, and it may open your eyes to places which you have not previously fully appreciated. This could be your next year's Christmas stocking filler!

Sniffing out the tanneries *Trevor Ogden*



In our October talk on Norwich at work, Sarah Doig showed a couple of 16th century woodcuts of tanning, and it struck me that the man's tool and work-station were similar to a photo I have which was taken in a tannery in India 30 years ago. The photo was part of an Indo-Dutch project to reduce environmental pollution from two cities on the Ganges. One of the cities was Kanpur, which is said to have 10,000 tanneries. Tanning is notorious for the amount of water it uses and the amount of pollution it can produce, and it made me wonder where in Norwich the tanneries were. We would expect them to be by the river and downstream, to reduce the pollution of the river running through the city. Sure enough, according to an article by Chris Barringer in the Historical Atlas of Norfolk, the medieval tanning district was Conesford, down the bottom end of King Street, but he says that as the city grew, Conesford became unsuitable and "meadow sites outside the city were chosen". Toftwood gets a mention in Chris's article as a possible source of bark for tanning.

Our September speaker Adrian O'dell also gives some information in his book "Norfolk Market Towns and their Industrial Development in the Nineteenth Century". He says that Norfolk had 82 tanneries in the 1600s and 46 in the 1700s. Dereham was probably spared any by the lack of a river.

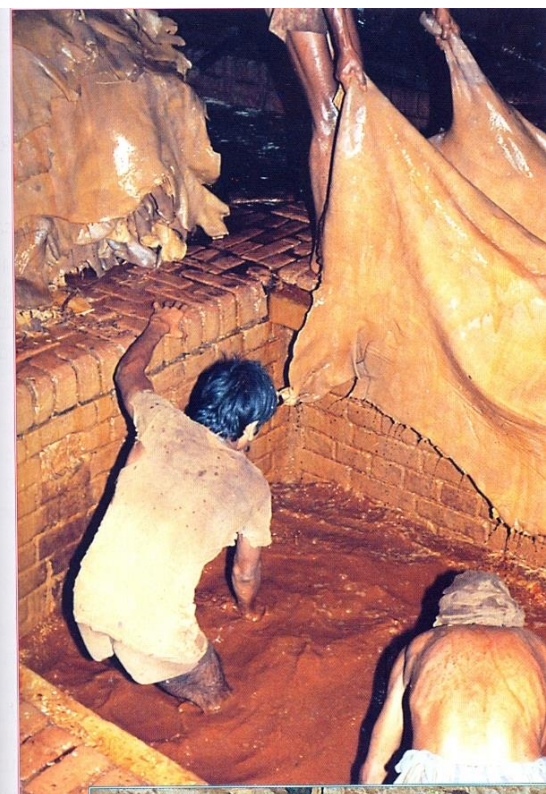
There were some graphic descriptions of 17th century tanneries by an enthusiastic physician called Bernardino Ramazzini, who worked in Modena, Italy (now the home of Ferrari cars). He included them in a book in 1700 about the occupational diseases of many various groups, including some groups which you would not think had specific diseases, such as music teachers, Jews, wet-nurses, horsemen, and nuns. He also covered various occupations that we would rather not think about at all, and this included the problems of tanneries. He remarks, "I must confess that every time I set foot in one of these places my stomach turns and I am unable to stand the rank smell for long without having a headache and wanting to vomit." In Modena, he wrote, "The law correctly forbids these workers from carrying out their trades in their homes so that they must work outside the city walls..." He says that in Ancient Rome "it was in the Tiber area that the dirtiest workshops were to be found, in particular those of tanners." He quotes the Roman poet Martial on the smell of the dog pelts soaking across the river in Trastevere. The smell of skins and hides awaiting treatment must have contributed to the smells of tanneries anywhere - "the harsh vapours of half-putrefied hides". Ramazzini says "the air of this area was infamous among the Romans, marked by the tremendous stench resulting from such filthy crafts and rank wares."

Ramazzini also refers to tanners steeping animal hides in a vat with lime and gall, treading them with their feet, washing and cleaning them before greasing them with tallow. Here he is running together several successive processes. It looks as if the treading process is going on in the background of the hide-cleaning woodcut shown by Sarah, but I do not know if that is what is happening in the second picture from the Indo-Dutch project. Soaking prepares the hides for the subsequent processes, and lime loosens the hair and epidermis, which the scraping aims to remove. The greasing might have been to help remove any remaining fat.

A notorious process was bating, another soaking, this time in a suspension of dung from dogs or poultry. Ramazzini seems keen to shock his prosperous readers with any distasteful detail of the work processes that they can usually ignore, so it is strange that he does not mention this. Apparently enzymes found in the dung softened the leather. The hides were then soaked for weeks or months in vats with sources of tannin, notably oak or chestnut bark and leaves, or oak galls. Perhaps this is what is going on in the second of Sarah's woodcuts. The tannin reacts with collagen and other proteins in the hide, eventually giving it the desirable physical properties and resistance to decay.

In the middle of the 19th century, it was discovered that some chromium compounds will tan leather in days rather than weeks, and they produce a result which is preferable in some ways, so it can be imagined that this has largely taken over from vegetable tanning. Ramazzini would have been interested to know that some of the chromium compounds can produce severe dermatitis and cancer unless precautions are taken.

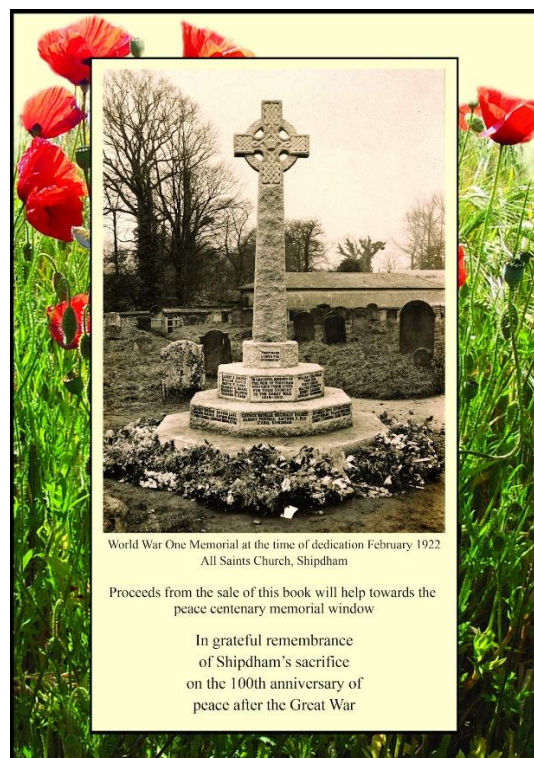
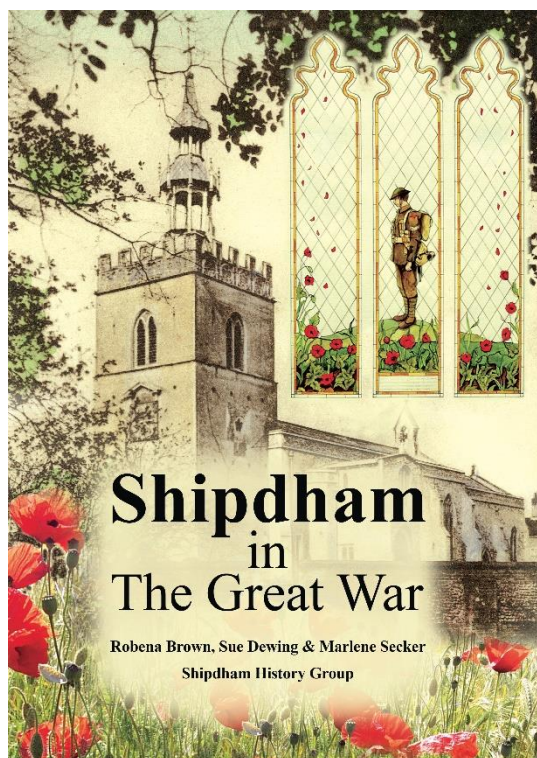
We can imagine that animal skins must have been used from very early times, and leather was certainly important to the classical civilisations, but like a lot of ancient processes, it is hard to imagine how the necessary sequence of treatments was discovered.



Acknowledgment. The photos are from the 1997 PhD thesis of F G Öry, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and are copyright J Schaapman-Blaakmeer. Thanks too to Sarah Doig for copies of her illustrations.

Shipdham in the Great War *Robena Brown*

In November 2018 Shipdham History Group published *Shipdham in The Great War* to honour and remember the men of the village who lost their lives in 1914-18 during World War I. Other local villages had similar publications, such as Scarning (Nick Hartley), Gressenhall (Bridget Yates), Elsing and North Elmham. Dereham's war memorial had been researched and details produced in a book by the Mid-Norfolk Family History Society some years before by Pat Skittrall and Margaret Bohn - a copy resides in the archive.



Having long collected photographs and information about the men named on the Shipdham war memorial we wanted future generations to know the fallen as real people rather than simply names engraved on stone.

The 2018 centenary of the 1918 ceasefire was internationally commemorated throughout Europe and beyond, and the village undertook an ambitious project to fund a new window of remembrance in All Saints Church as a lasting memorial to the fallen and to express the gratitude the village felt for those lost soldiers and sailors. A goodly chunk of that support came from sales of our book which was to be sold after the Remembrance Day Service in the church in 2018.

We compiled a chronological history of the village and residents from 1908 to the end of 1922. This included a life story of each man lost and we drew heavily on the wonderful archive of the Dereham and Fakenham Times in the DHT archive. Sue Dewing and I spent what must have been hundreds of hours reading over 780 newspapers to extract the many wonderful reports, articles and images which helped to bring 'our men' to life.

Visits were made to the Norfolk Record Office and the Norfolk Regimental Museum to gather information, and we interviewed countless descendants and relatives of the men and the whole process was a very enjoyable journey of discovery.

Breckland Council and Shipdham Parish Council both awarded us sizeable grants to produce the book which allowed us to sell it at virtually the cost of printing so it was affordable to all while increasing the profit to pass on to help pay for the commemorative window. It was decided to self-publish thus producing a final copy in a PDF format; we

arranged the book's printing ourselves, thus saving more costs. The beautiful cover designed by Sue Walker-White ensured a good presentation.

All of the first print run sold within 24 hours and a second edition print sold within a further month. We have not had a third edition so far but if there is sufficient interest at some time in the future then we will no doubt make revisions using information and images since found.

We visited the stained glass window makers, Devlin Plummer of Great Moulton, and it was fascinating to see all elements of the window, some still in early construction, and this panel, the centrepiece that took our breath away and brought a tear to our eyes. The window was duly fitted south facing to welcome the summer sun, yet projecting the soldier on the grass when backlit by evening lamps inside All Saints Church.

On Easter Sunday 2019, the window was blessed in a very special well attended ceremony by the Rev Jonathan Meyrick, Bishop of Kings Lynn, and the vicar, Rev Gill Wells.



As it is now the time of remembrance again, perhaps I can reflect on some of what this project has taught us about the 'war to end all wars'. If only it had been.

Using data taken from our research which is probably akin to that relating to every village, town and city in the UK, we found that the majority of men were of lower ranks in the army and were lost in the trenches on the western front.

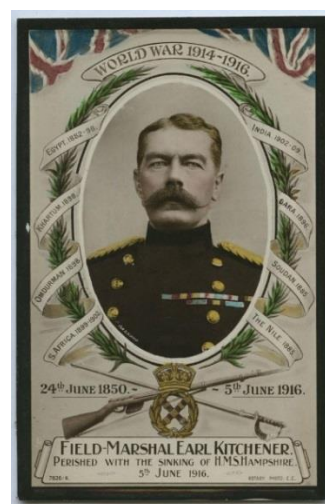
There were, however, notable exceptions: the first two men of a total of 33 lost from the village in 1915 died from natural causes. Many young men had hardly left the village beyond Dereham before voluntarily enlisting (conscription only came into being after the passing of the Military Services Act on 27 January 1916) thus, thereafter mixing with countless others during training and guarding home shores prior to being sent overseas, they succumbed to illness and disease not previously encountered. Without the life-saving effects of current day antibiotics, easily treatable conditions today often proved fatal in war, especially after injury.

Sometimes the gruelling training caused underlying but previously unknown health conditions to manifest and this was the case with my own grandfather's cousin who was discharged with a serious heart condition only apparent on the parade ground. He returned to the village to die of heart disease a few months later. He was then treated badly by relatives of men who were still in danger in various theatres of war overseas, being accused of cowardice and was even attacked once by a soldier's wife outside the doctor's surgery despite the fact that the man voluntarily enlisted but was rejected by the army as unfit for service.

One soldier, aged 36 years, the oldest lost, died in Salonika in 1915. Though he was recorded as KIA (Killed in Action) it is most likely that he died of malaria as it was noted during our research that far more soldiers died of natural causes in the mosquito infested river plains there than ever died of injuries sustained in action.

Two of the 33 young men who died were sailors and one was a soldier who drowned at sea. All of them were lost in remarkable circumstances and if our editor has room here *[delighted to make room - ed]* I will detail those three men and the details of their untimely ends.

Seaman Walter Everett, formerly a 24 year old village wheelwright was a crew member on the HMS Hampshire. The vessel had survived the Battle of Jutland at the end of May 1916 and the armoured cruiser then sailed to Scapa Flow where she was boarded by Field Marshall Earl Kitchener on his secret mission to Archangel in northern Russia for talks with the British allies. The vessel struck a mine near Orkney and within 15 minutes sunk with 650 men of whom only 12 crewmen survived.



Private Walter Holman (another of my grandfather's cousins), transferred to the Essex Regiment early in the war to see active service. The unescorted HMT Royal Edward left Alexandria in 1915 carrying hundreds of soldiers to reinforce the Gallipoli campaign but was the first troopship casualty of the war to suffer an enemy torpedo attack. Only 18 of 300 Essex men survived.

Arthur Macro, the youngest lad lost, was only 18 years old when he was drowned in the Mediterranean in July 1917. His ship, HMS Aster, left Malta escorting a hospital ship



travelling to Salonika but was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-Boat in 1917. Arthur's body, the only one of the ten crewmen who died, was recovered from the sea and buried in Malta. Arthur's photograph was taken in Malta shortly before his ship sailed.

The image of World War I always seems to be that of mud and trenches and men enduring and dying in terrible conditions. We should perhaps also think of those who died in very different circumstances.

Dereham Heritage Trust - 20 and 30 years ago *Ken Hawkins*

We have no Newsletters from 2010 in our records, but we do have them for 1990 and 2000.



The 75th Anniversary ZEPPELIN RAID EXHIBITION 8th September 1990, Church House, 11 - 4.30

Seventy-five years ago Dereham suffered what was probably the town's most traumatic event - the Zeppelin Raid on the evening of 8th September 1915.

Four Zeppelins had set off for England. One turned back with engine trouble shortly after take-off, and another developed engine trouble shortly after passing over the North Norfolk coast bound for London, and returned to its home base. It was this Zeppelin that passed over Dereham, approaching the town from the direction of Scarning just before 9 pm. Mrs. Cook, a small girl at the time, recalls hearing the crash of the first bomb, jumping out of bed and diving for the stairs. On her way down she was able to clearly see the light in the cabin under the gas container.

Several bombs were dropped as the Zeppelin passed over Church Farm, another dropped on the roadway close to the Guildhall and made a hole 6 feet across and 4 feet deep and demolished part of the Guildhall outbuildings and badly damaged the roof of the Church Infants' School.

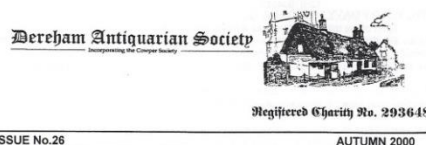
The most serious damage was caused in Church Street where a huge bomb exploded. The White Lion pub was badly damaged, as was Mr. Hamerton's grocery shop and the photographic studio of Mr. Cave. Two local men, Mr. James Taylor, china and

earthenware dealer, and Mr. Harry Patterson, jeweller, both of High Street, and two soldiers of the 2/1st City of London Yeomanry, who were stationed in the town at the time, were killed.

On hearing the commotion, Mr. Catton, agent for Singer sewing machines who lived next door to the Corn Hall, ran out into the Market Place. A soldier ran into his house seconds before it received a direct hit and died from wounds received.

Hero of the evening was Mr. Leech, who had a tailoring business where 'Cosy Corner' is now situated. He ran to the King's Arms to ask for the maroons, which summoned the fire brigade, to be fired. Everyone was cowering down in the cellar, but eventually Mr. Leech obtained the keys to the outbuilding where the maroons were kept. He enlisted the help of a passing soldier, and after Mr. Leech lit the fuse of the first maroon the soldier rolled over in the cabbages and bolted! After firing the second maroon the Zeppelin also left!

The Zeppelin is supposed to have been attracted by soldiers on the Church Tower signalling to others on the tower of Bylaugh Church, where there was a large Yeomanry camp. Around 70 explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped in and around Dereham.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Autumn is upon us, and it's time for writing up a new Newsletter. Much has been achieved in the last quarter, and the following is a brief outline of the Society's activities.

1. COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Some of the items discussed in Committee are as follows:

- Materials have been purchased to begin building the new storage storeroom in the Archive building.
- All costumes and textiles have now been packed away in special boxes by Elaine Newton and Ruth Warwick-Smith. Elaine is planning for purchasing a digital camera, in order to keep photographic records of all our textiles on computer records.
- A new computer has been purchased from the Terry Dany fund, for the recording of the Archive database material. The old machine remains in use for compiling the database of the Museum's contents.
- The Chairman and the Society's Secretary attended a SEMS Marketing course at the Long Shop Museum at Leiston, in Suffolk, which is where Garrett built his famous steam traction engines and static engines. Rose and I will return to Leiston on 7th November to discuss the work set us during the course. Those attending the course came from museums at Mildenhall, Bury St. Edmunds, Kings Lynn, March, Swaffham, Colchester, and Chelmsford.
- The Five Year Plan previously submitted to the Museum authorities, in order to gain official recognition, is almost completed, and it is now time to formulate a new five Year Plan to submit to SEMS in order to maintain Registration for Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum.

2. ANNUAL SOCIETY DINNER

The Annual Dinner, at the Phoenix Hotel on 11th October, went well. The Guest Speaker, Vic Greenwood, gave a very interesting talk on Passementerie - the art of rope decoration and tassels making. There was so much interest in this subject that the evening did not close until quite late.

3. STORAGE ROOM

The storage room, at the Archive, is nearing completion. The fitting of windows, door and electric, plus painting, is all that is necessary before becoming ready for use.

BILL SCOLES

On 12th August the Society lost another of its stalwarts.

Bill may not have been known to you all, particularly our newer members, as he didn't often come to meetings, but he was a member for many years. He was one of those unsung heroes who worked behind the scenes, both with ourselves and the many other associations of which he was a member. He was always ready to lend a hand when needed, and always on call as Terry's regular No.2 when he had to take a party on a guided tour of the town.

We could ill afford to lose Bill, and the fact that his Memorial Service was attended by some 300 people, including members of the Scouts, the British Legion, and various other groups, shows the affection and respect that he inspired.

The Society will be the poorer for his passing.

In 1990, there were just two main stories - the 75th Anniversary Zeppelin Raid Exhibition in Church House, and an article on timber framed buildings.

The Autumn 2000 newsletter contained many short items of news and plans, plus one longer piece on the conserving and storage of textiles in our collection.

From the Archive *Robena Brown*

In post-war Norfolk the old newspapers report that many war memorials were being erected to remember and honour those who died in World War I and to give comfort to their families.

The weather of March to September was the driest known in records which began in 1727. 1921 turned out to have the lowest precipitation in England for the whole of the twentieth century.

As a result of this drought there were many fires reported in the press and with slow communication of the day, and horse-drawn fire tenders, it was very common for the Fire Brigade of the time to arrive long after the fire had consumed buildings.

Here we have two images, both from our 1921 archive. The first, from 3 September, shows a photograph of Miss C Sheddick (probably a relative of our former Vice Chair, Bob Davies' wife Margaret nee Sheddick) and which has an interesting caption: *'Patrol Leader C. Sheddick, a Dereham Girl Guide, who has received a medal from the Dereham Fire Brigade for rendering assistance at fires.'*



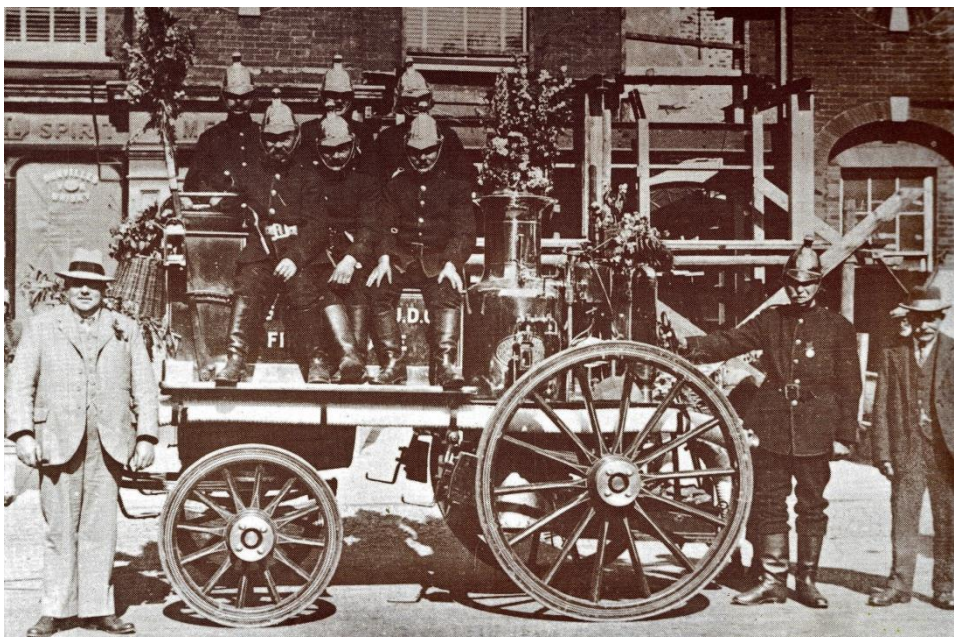
Patrol Leader C. Sheddick, a Dereham Girl Guide, who has received a medal from the Dereham Fire Brigade for rendering assistance at fires.

FIRE AT DEREHAM.

SUN CAUSES BLAZE.

On Tuesday evening a fire was discovered on the premises of Messrs. F. and G. Vincent, factors and general warehousemen, Swaffham Road, East Dereham, but, fortunately, was discovered in time to prevent the blaze from assuming large proportions. A passer-by noticed smoke issuing from one of the windows, and informed Mr. Sidney Vincent, who, upon entering the premises, found the showroom full of smoke and a quantity of papers on a table by a window well alight. Assistance was summoned. Supt. Mann, Sergt. Adcock, P.-c.s Lown, Burlington, Race, and Cooper being quickly on the scene, and in a short time the outbreak was extinguished with buckets of water. Under the direction of Supt. Roger Rex the fire brigade also promptly responded to the summons, but all danger was at an end when they arrived, and they were only required to ensure that the premises were left in safety. It is conjectured that the outbreak was caused by the rays of the sun focussing through the window.

The second is from July 1921 and details the fire at Messrs F & G Vincent of Swaffham Road does not tell us why *'all danger was at an end when they arrived'* but perhaps Miss Sheddick was already on the scene and had extinguished it!



The Dereham Fire Brigade's Merryweather steam engine decorated for a Hospital Sunday parade about 1924. Mr Roger Jex, Captain of the Brigade is on the extreme left. From *Memories of Dereham* by Mildred Cook and Terry Davy.



This photo shows Dereham and other local village coaches lined up in the Market Place ready to take children out on a day trip to Yarmouth in 1931 [watched by Lord Coke - ed]. This had been organised by the Dereham British Legion. Drivers (L-R) and their respective vehicles are: Percy Thompson (AJS), Cyril Thompson (Commer), F. Watkins (Star Flyer), Fred Thompson (Bedford), B. Rudd (Ford), R Barnes (Guildford), J. Leveridge (Dennis), Walter Rudling (Rio), V. Peeling (Dennis) and W. Reeve (Guildford). The names are from *More Memories of Dereham* by Mildred Cook and Terry Davy; picture from Robena Brown.

Programme of events 2020-21

We have a full programme of speakers and events planned, though it has to remain open to change. We still hope to resume meetings when government guidelines allow and are keeping this under constant review, but until at least March 2021, we are showing on line presentations. Our last three 'meetings' enabled those who had seen the talks to take part in some very interesting and extended discussions. We hope and believe that the same will apply for our future talks too. If you get this Newsletter by email, we will send you a web link which will enable you to watch a presentation at a time of your own choosing (up to the date of the meeting). We will also send you a second web link to a Zoom meeting to take place at the scheduled meeting time of 19:30 on the planned meeting date. This will enable you to join a virtual DHT meeting, involving the presenter, to allow you and the other participants to ask questions and join the discussion. **If you get this Newsletter through the post, but would be able to get Internet access, please let Ken Hawkins know, and we will send links to your chosen email address.**

We are not making the usual £1 charge to members to watch the talk or join the meeting, but we will be pleased to welcome donations to offset our costs. Payment can be made by cheque or bank transfer as noted in the [Membership matters](#) section above.

The December talk is *Thatchers and Thackers, Larwoods and Fleggs: Surname maps as windows on the past*, presented by Trevor Ogden. Trevor says: "Surname maps can tell us where families originated, how the names came about, and even some things about dialects hundreds of years ago. There were over 800 surnames in the 1881 census for which Norfolk had more than half the British examples, and at least a dozen names whose national centre was the Dereham area. These give some surprising clues about Norfolk naming habits after the Norman Conquest, and population movement since." The talk can be seen at <https://youtu.be/gYarmiaztu8> (Passcode: zQRA0z+o) and **should be watched before the meeting**. The link for the discussion at 7.30pm on Wednesday 9 December is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82275992918?pwd=V2cwUmRWQ2pyM00wQ0VqSnlrblXlQZz09;>
you should not need either the Meeting ID: 822 7599 2918 or the Passcode: 474632.

If you know any non members who might enjoy the talk, please ask them to contact ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

13 January 2021 - on line Maud's Story – the life of a Norfolk Trading Wherry Speaker: Linda Pargeter 10 February 2021 - on line George Skipper - the Architect's life and works Speaker: Richard Barnes 10 March 2021 - on line 25 years of archaeological research at Sedgeford Speaker: Gary Rossin	14 April 2021 - to be decided Making tracks through Mid-Norfolk Speaker: Paddy Anstey 12 May 2021 - AGM <i>Planned dates for 2021 meetings continue to be the second Wednesday of each month. As and when we can restart physical meetings, they will be at Trinity Methodist Church, 31 Trinity Close, Dereham NR19 2EP (off Theatre Street), and start at 1930. Admission to talks is £1 for members of Dereham Heritage Trust and £3 for non members. Visitors are always welcome, with the fee payable on the door, refreshments included.</i>
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Richard Barnes, who is giving our February talk, has sent us an invitation to everyone to attend the on line launch of his book *George Skipper: The Architect's Life and Works* at Jarrold's on 24 November: [George Skipper: The Architect's Life and Works | A Book launch | Jarrold Virtual Event](#).

Under normal circumstances, our AGM - the first since we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation - would have been held in February. In the hope that things might have settled down as the New Year progresses, we have postponed it until May; the February date will be a 'normal' meeting (on line presentation and discussion).

Membership matters

For anyone seeing this Newsletter who is not currently a member, can we invite you to consider joining? Our membership year runs annually from 1 March to the end of February; the normal subscription rate is £12 for a single member, £20 for two people at the same address, but **from now until the end of February 2021, it's half price**. The membership form is at http://www.derehamhistory.com/uploads/1/6/2/3/16236968/dht_membership_leaflet_2020.pdf, or request a copy from Ken Hawkins. In normal circumstances, we can take payment at one of our meetings, but while these are suspended, there are two ways open for payment. The first is to send your completed form, with a cheque payable to Dereham Heritage Trust, to Ken Hawkins, DHT, 26 Hillfields, Dereham NR19 1UE. The second is to scan and email your details to ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk, and pay by bank transfer to Dereham Heritage Trust, sort code 20-28-20, account 10179752 - but if you use this please make sure you quote your surname as a reference so that we can recognise the payment as coming from you.

Next issue

In normal times, we plan to produce a Newsletter every quarter, in January, April, July and October. The press date for the next 'ordinary' issue is **15 December**: if you have material for this issue, please send it in to Ken Hawkins. And please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any other comments of any sort. In between Newsletters, our website www.derehamhistory.com is updated regularly so please have a look now and again.